Amendments to the Claims:

The following Listing of the Claims replaces all prior listings of the claims within this application.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method of treating particulate material to form a solid aggregate matrix including the steps of:
   - providing a urea formaldehyde precondensate;
   - providing a polar solvent;
   - providing additional urea;
   - providing an acid or salt thereof;
   - providing a sugar;
   - mixing the polar solvent, additional urea, precondensate, sugar and acid to form a binder composition;
   - mixing the binder composition with the particulate material; and
   - allowing the binder composition to set over a period of time longer than 30 minutes to form a solid aggregate matrix,

   the acid or salt thereof being selected such as to render the pH of the binder composition to a value from 2.0 to 5.3.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein the polar solvent is selected from the group consisting of water, alcohol, and mixtures thereof.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) A method according to claim [[3]]1 or 2 wherein the sugar is selected from the group consisting of sucrose, glucose and fructose and mixtures thereof.

5. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 which includes the further step of adding a binder promoter for enhancing the binding between the binder composition and the particulate material, prior to the step of setting.

6. (Original) A method according to claim 5 wherein the binding promoter is a complex fatty acid derived from the complete oxidation of vegetable sugars.

7. (Original) A method according to claim 5 or 6 wherein, more particularly, the binding promoter is selected from the group consisting of humic acid, fulmic acid, salts and mixtures thereof.

8. (Original) A method according to claim 5 wherein the binding promoter is bitumen.

9. (Original) A method according to claim 8 wherein the bitumen is in the form of an anionic bitumen emulsion.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 5 wherein the binding promoter is in the form of a surfactant.

11. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 10 wherein the surfactant is in the form of sodium dodecyl ~~benzene~~ benzene.

12. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 which includes the further step of adding any one or more agents selected from the group consisting of silicones, silanes, silanoles, oils, anti-corrosion agents, ultra violet light blocking agents, biocides, pH buffers, cement, ammonia, ammonium salts, plasticisers, ligna sulphinates and oxides thereof, phenols and mixtures thereof, prior to setting.

13. (Original) A method according to claim 12 wherein the plasticisers are selected from the group consisting of phthalates, hydrocarbons, acetates, latex and glycols.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 12 or 13 wherein the ultra violet light blocking agents are selected from the group consisting of organic phenols, phosphates and inorganic oxides.

15. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the particulate material is selected from the group consisting of sand, soil, gravel, natural or synthetic fibres including glass-, steel-, carbon- and polymeric fibres, clay, silicas, particulate ore, rubber, stones, pebbles, partly bound cementitious masses, grass, slag, waste dump material, coal particles, ash, and mixtures thereof.

16. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the formaldehyde:urea ratio in the binder composition is between 1.5 and 2.5:1.

17. (Original) A method according to claim 16 wherein the formaldehyde:urea ratio in the binder composition is 1.83:1.

18. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 which includes the further step of compacting the aggregate matrix after the step of mixing and prior to the step of setting into a solid.

19. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the acid is a weak organic acid.

20. (Original) A method according to claim 19 wherein the weak organic acid is selected from the group consisting of citric acid and acetic acid and mixtures thereof.

21.- 39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently amended) A settable binder composition for mixing with a particulate material and setting to form a solid aggregate matrix, the binder composition comprising a mixture of a urea formaldehyde precondensate; a polar solvent; additional urea; a sugar; and an acid or salt thereof selected such as to render the pH of the binder composition to a value from 2.0 to 5.3 so that the binder composition sets into a solid over a period of time longer than 30 minutes from being mixed with the particulate material.

41. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 40 wherein the polar solvent is selected from the group consisting of water, alcohol, and mixtures thereof.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Currently amended) A binder composition according to claim [[42]]40 or 41 wherein the sugar is selected from the group consisting of sucrose, glucose and fructose and mixtures thereof.

44. (Currently amended) A binder composition according to ~~any one of claims 40 to 43~~ claim 40 which includes a binder promoter for enhancing the binding between the binder composition and the particulate material.

45. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 44 wherein the binding promoter is a complex fatty acid derived from the complete oxidation of vegetable sugars.

46. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 44 or 45 wherein, more particularly, the binding promoter is selected from the group consisting of humic acid, fulmic acid, salts and mixtures thereof.

47. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 44 wherein the binding promoter is bitumen.

48. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 47 wherein the bitumen is in the form of an anionic bitumen emulsion.

49. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 44 wherein the binding promoter is in the form of a surfactant.

50. (Currently amended) A binder composition according to claim 49 wherein the surfactant is in the form of sodium dodecyl ~~benzene~~ benzene.

51. (Currently amended) A binder composition according to ~~any one of claims 40 to 50~~ claim 40 which includes any one or more agents selected from the group consisting of silicones, silanes, silanoles, oils, anti-corrosion agents, ultra violet light blocking agents, biocides, pH buffers, cement, ammonia, ammonium salts, plasticisers, ligna sulphinates and oxides thereof, phenols and mixtures thereof.

52. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 51 wherein the plasticisers are selected from the group consisting of phthalates, hydrocarbons, acetates, latex and glycols.

53. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 51 or 52 wherein the ultra violet light blocking agents are selected from the group consisting of organic phenols, phosphates and inorganic oxides.

54. (Currently amended) A binder composition according to ~~any one of claims 40 to 53~~ claim 40 wherein the formaldehyde:urea ratio is between 1.5 and 2.5:1.

55. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 54 wherein the formaldehyde:urea ratio is 1.83:1.

56. (Currently amended) A binder composition according to ~~any one of claims 40 to 55~~ claim 40 wherein the acid is a weak organic acid.

57. (Original) A binder composition according to claim 56 wherein the weak organic acid is selected from the group consisting of citric acid and acetic acid and mixtures thereof.

58. (Currently amended) A solid aggregate mixture formed by treating a body of particulate material by a method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 20~~ claim 1.

59. (Currently amended) A solid aggregate mixture formed by treating a body of particulate material with a binder composition according to ~~any one of claims 40 to 57~~ claim 40.

60. (Original) An artifact formed from a solid aggregate matrix according to claim 58 or 59.

61. (Canceled)

62. (Canceled)

63. (Canceled)